

but has not, in fact, established a lack of unity of invention of the claims of the present application. As stated in MPEP § 1893.03(d), “[a] group of inventions is considered to form a single general inventive concept where there is a technical relationship among the inventions that involves at least one common or corresponding special technical feature”.

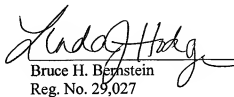
Applicants submit that claims 1-34 and 35-51 of the present application define only a single inventive concept, that is, of providing a heat exchanger in a washing apparatus. The “inventions” identified by the Examiner, *i.e.*, in Groups 1 and 2, are disclosed as different elements of this inventive concept. However, they are still part of the single general inventive concept of providing a heat exchanger in a washing apparatus. While the Examiner has identified that “they lack the same or corresponding special technical features for the following reasons: claim 1 can not share a special technical feature since the limitations of claim 1 are not novel”, the question is not whether the embodiments of the invention differ, but rather whether the embodiments share common features. Thus, since the Examiner has not explained why there is no single general inventive concept, but has merely made a conclusion to that effect without providing any reasoning to justify that conclusion, and since it is clear that there is only a single inventive concept defined in claims 1-34 and 35-51, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw the requirement for lack of unity of invention.

Additionally, it would appear that the search for the groups identified by the Examiner would be coextensive or at least significantly overlap. That is, if the Examiner were to perform a search for the embodiment of Group 2, there would not appear to be a serious burden in continuing the examination of the other embodiment, especially since all of the claims are directed to providing a heat exchanger in a washing apparatus.

For the foregoing reasons, it is submitted that the Restriction Requirement (requirement for lack of unity of invention) in this application is improper and it is respectfully requested that it be reconsidered and withdrawn.

Should the Examiner have any questions, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,  
Shigeru SHIRAI et al.



Linda J. Hodge  
Reg. #47,348

Bruce H. Bernstein  
Reg. No. 29,027

May 3, 2010  
GREENBLUM & BERNSTEIN, P.L.C.  
1950 Roland Clarke Place  
Reston, VA 20191  
(703) 716-1191